

# Teens don't like condoms

## Risky behaviour is rife — MEC

POPPY LOUW

MOST teenagers in Gauteng admit to preferring unsafe sex, the provincial social development department has found.

Briefing the media on its study "Factors associated with teenage pregnancy in Gauteng province", social development MEC Nandi Mayathula-Khoza said teen pregnancies were a problem that could not be ignored.

"Yes, girls who fall pregnant have a right to continue with school. This issue, however, contributes to the level of unemployment, considering the girls who drop out of school due to pregnancy."

Experimentation with sex, and factors such as having multiple sexual partners and partners of disparate ages, had to be discouraged, Mayathula-Khoza said.

The study, part of a national survey, was conducted over five weeks at schools. More than 500 pupils between the ages of 13 and 18

**'Children taught life orientation but teen pregnancy unabated'**

filled in questionnaires, and 19 focus groups, consisting of 10 to 12 pupils, were formed.

The Department of Basic Education estimates that 94 000 schoolgirls became pregnant during

2011.

Just over 1 600 pregnancies were reported at Mpumalanga schools in the whole of 2012 but by May this year 1 564 pupils were reportedly pregnant.

The Gauteng department of health found that 4 217 of 1 040 760 pupils in the province became pregnant in 2011, compared with 4 874 of 953 170 pupils three years earlier.

But Mayathula-Khoza said the reduction in the number of pregnancies should not stop the province from taking further action.

Earlier this year Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi lambasted older men who lured girls into having sex for money.

He said girls were four to eight times more likely to be infected with HIV than boys of the same age.

The national department found that 28% of schoolgirls countrywide were HIV-positive, whereas only



ADDED LOAD: Tens of thousands of schoolgirls become pregnant every year because of poor sexual choices

Picture: ESA ALEXANDER

4% of boys were infected with the virus.

The DA's Gauteng education spokesman, Khume Ramulifho,

attributed the prevalence of teenage pregnancies to a lack of practical education.

"Children are taught about life

orientation at school but, though they might pass with flying colours, the problem does not seem to disappear."

# YOUTH CONFESS THEY DON'T CONDOMISE

**Survey reveals shocking trends**

**Zoë Mahopo**

**A RECENT survey has revealed that teenagers enjoy unprotected sex and are not willing to use condoms.**

Titled *Factors Associated with Teenage Pregnancy in Gauteng Province*, the study was conducted with 508 teenagers between the ages of 13 and 18 years.

The study included focus group discussions with learners, parents and healthcare workers, and one of the issues that came out was that most teenagers preferred unprotected sex.

MBC for social development Nandi Mayathula-Khoza said this was worrying as it means that the youth were being exposed to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

Speaking during a media briefing in Johannesburg yesterday, Mayathula-Khoza said teenagers fell pregnant partly because of lack of resources and dire social conditions. She said although statistics showed a decline in teenage pregnancy, there was still cause for concern.

Mayathula-Khoza said statistics from the Gauteng department of education showed a 20% reduction of pregnancies among children of school-going age. The rate dropped from 4 874 in 2008 to 4 271 in 2011.



**CONCERNED:** Director of communications in the Gauteng department of social development, Dr Sello Mokoena, with MEC Faith Mayathula-Khoza during a media briefing in Johannesburg yesterday

PHOTO: BAFANA MAHLANGU

“We must all stand up and work with our children. Engaging in sex should be the last thing, their education must come first,” Mayathula-Khoza said.

In the same breath, Mayathula-Khoza also announced the launch of

of a campaign against abuse, named Adopt a Centre for Abused Women and Children: From Victimhood to Survival.

“While we have made significant progress, there is still a lot of work to be done before we can say we have

truly achieved equality and have dealt with the issue of abuse in our province,” Mayathula-Khoza said.

She said the campaign was aimed at bringing awareness and helping the victims of abuse. — [mahopoz@sowetan.co.za](mailto:mahopoz@sowetan.co.za)